

Area: Health & Education  
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Degree: A.S. - Funeral Service Education

## Funeral Service Education Degree

**Major Code: 011516A01**

This degree prepares students for entry-level positions in funeral service. It is designed to meet the prerequisites for licensure and employment in the field of funeral service as funeral directors or embalmers.

The Funeral Service Education Program at American River College is accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) 992 Mantua Pike, Suite 108, Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097 (816) 233-3747.

Web: [abfse.org](http://abfse.org)

*NOTE: All courses, including general education, require a grade of "C" or better.*

The annual passage rate of first-time takers on the National Board Examination (NBE) for the most recent three-year period for this institution and all ABFSE accredited funeral service education programs is posted on the ABFSE website: [abfse.org](http://abfse.org).

National Board Examination scores, graduation rates, and employment rates for this and other ABFSE-accredited programs are available at [abfse.org](http://abfse.org). To request a printed copy of this program's scores and rates, go to Health and Education 770 or by email at [RoseV@arc.losrios.edu](mailto:RoseV@arc.losrios.edu) or by telephone at (916) 484-8145.

### Student Learning Outcomes

*Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:*

- choose the correct techniques for each embalming case.
- analyze information given by the family to complete the necessary paperwork for the state of California and other government agencies.
- recommend options for the appropriate disposition of the decedent's remains.
- contact the appropriate clergy, agencies, and organizations for the disposition of the remains.
- evaluate and prioritize the funeral choices of the family in a timely manner.
- create a funeral service for the family.
- participate as a volunteer in a community service activity.

### Career Opportunities

The student is eligible to take the National and State Board examination to become a licensed funeral director in California. The student also meets the criteria to take the National and State embalmer's examination.

### Program Goals and Objectives

As an accredited mortuary college our program goals and objectives are as follows:

- To prepare students to be members of a human services profession
- To prepare students to be members of the community in which they serve
- To be participants in the relationship between bereaved families and those engaged in the funeral service profession
- To offer professional knowledge of and compliance with federal, state provincial/territorial, and local regulatory guidelines
- To be sensitive to the responsibility for public health, safety and welfare in caring for human remains

### The Primary Objectives of this Program are:

- To enlarge the background and knowledge of students about the funeral service profession
- To educate students in every phase of funeral service, and to help enable them to develop the proficiency and skills necessary for the profession as defined by the American Board of Funeral Service Education, Inc.
- To educate students concerning the responsibilities of the funeral services profession to the community at large
- To emphasize high standards of ethical conduct
- To provide a curriculum at the post-secondary level of instruction
- To encourage student and faculty research in the field of funeral service
- To equip students with information related to the social, legal, psychological, religious and public health issues that are associated with death
- To offer students a comprehensive curriculum that will challenge their academic abilities that are consistent with the curriculum required by the American Board of Funeral Service Education, Inc.
- To prepare students for success on the National Board Examination as well as state examinations

## Enrollment Eligibility

To be eligible for enrollment in the program, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Graduation from an accredited high school (graduates from outside the United States must have transcripts evaluated by an approved independent agency), or successful completion of General Educational Development (GED) Test or California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE).
- The Funeral Service education program has two options for sequence. Each sequence has specific requirements listed below:

**(One Year Sequence)** A cumulative college GPA of 2.0 and a grade of “C” or better in the following courses: ACCT 101, BIOL 102 or BIOL 103, BUS 340, ENGWR 300 or ENGWR 480, FSE 300, and MATH 120, SPEECH 301 or 331, PSYC 390. In addition, the General Education requirements for graduation must be satisfied in the following areas: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Living Skills and Ethnic/ Multicultural Studies. The FSE program will allow grades in-progress during the application process.

**(Two Year Sequence)** BIOL 102 or BIOL 103, ENGWR 300 or ENGWR 480, FSE 300, and MATH 100 with a grade of “C” or better. The FSE program will allow grades in-progress during the application process.

- Minimum cumulative college GPA of 2.0.
- A Curriculum Planning Summary Sheet completed by an ARC counselor and dated within the semester the enrollment packet is submitted.
- A completed pre-enrollment application.

## Enrollment Process

Eligible students are selected for the program according to the following steps:

- Pre-enrollment applications to the program may be obtained from the Health and Education Division Office, the Coordinator of the Funeral Service Education program, or at [arc.losrios.edu](http://arc.losrios.edu). The Funeral Service Education program currently accepts students once per year for the Spring semester which begins in January. Deadline to submit the application is by the second Friday in November.
- Only students who meet the pre-enrollment requirements and follow the pre-enrollment procedures will be considered for the program.
- Selection is based on a random selection process should the number of applicants exceed available space in the program.
- Students admitted to the Funeral Service Education program are required to have a physical examination, laboratory and licensing agencies inoculations, drug screen, and background check by the completion of the first semester of the program. Students are responsible for any costs incurred related to meeting the health requirements.
- If a minimum number of qualified applicants are not received, enrollment will be delayed until the following semester, at which time applicants will need to reapply.

## Requirements for Degree

67.5 Units

### 1 YEAR SEQUENCE

#### Pre-FSE Semester

All general education requirements for graduation must be completed prior to the first day of instruction.

#### 1st Semester

CHEM 130	Chemistry for Funeral Service.....	4
FSE 310	Funeral Directing I .....	3
FSE 320	Funeral Service Law and Ethics .....	3
FSE 350	Restorative Art .....	3.5
FSE 360	Embalming I .....	4

#### Summer

FSE 335	Funeral Service Management .....	3
FSE 340	Pathology for Funeral Service .....	2

#### 2nd Semester

BIOL 130	Microbiology for Funeral Services .....	3
FSE 312	Funeral Directing II .....	3
FSE 330	Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry.....	3
FSE 297	Internship in Funeral Service Education .....	5
FSE 365	Embalming II .....	2
FSE 370	Funeral Services Counseling .....	3

### TWO YEAR SEQUENCE

#### Pre-FSE Semester

BIOL 102 or BIOL 103	Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology (4) .....	4
ENGWR 300 or ENGWR 480	Human Anatomy for Funeral Services (4) .....	3
FSE 300	College Composition (3) .....	3
MATH 100	Honors College Composition (3) .....	2
	Introduction to Funeral Service.....	2
	Elementary Algebra .....	5

#### 1st Semester

BUS 340	Business Law .....	3
CHEM 130	Chemistry for Funeral Service.....	4
FSE 310	Funeral Directing I .....	3
FSE 320	Funeral Service Law and Ethics .....	3
SPEECH 301 or SPEECH 331	Public Speaking (3) .....	3
	Group Discussion (3) .....	3

#### Summer

FSE 335	Funeral Service Management .....	3
FSE 340	Pathology for Funeral Service .....	2

#### 2nd Semester

BIOL 130	Microbiology for Funeral Services .....	3
FSE 312	Funeral Directing II .....	3
FSE 330	Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry.....	3

#### 3rd Semester

ACCT 101	Fundamentals of College Accounting.....	3
FSE 350	Restorative Art .....	3.5
FSE 360	Embalming I .....	4

#### Summer (if not taken previously)

FSE 335	Funeral Service Management (3) .....	3
FSE 340	Pathology for Funeral Service (2) .....	2

#### 4th Semester

FSE 297	Internship in Funeral Service Education .....	5
FSE 365	Embalming II .....	2
FSE 370	Funeral Services Counseling .....	3
PSYC 390	Psychology of Death and Dying .....	3

**Associate Degree Requirements:** The Funeral Service Education Associate in Science (A.S.) Degree may be obtained by completion of the required program, plus general education requirements, plus sufficient electives to meet a 60-unit total. See ARC graduation requirements.

## Funeral Service Education

### FSE 297 Internship in Funeral Service Education 5 Units

*Prerequisite:* ACCT 101, BIOL 130, BUS 340, FSE 312, FSE 350, and FSE 360 with grades of "C" or better

*Corequisite:* FSE 365, FSE 370, and PSYC 390

*Enrollment Limitation:* Students must show proof they have completed all general education and competency requirements for graduation.

*Hours:* 18 hours LEC; 216 hours LAB

This course provides an opportunity to apply classroom instruction in funeral service education to real-world practice in the community. Interns participate in an off-site lab experience program and approved off-campus preceptor sites. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

### FSE 300 Introduction to Funeral Service 2 Units

*Advisory:* ENGWR 300, ENGWR 480, or ESLW 340

*Hours:* 36 hours LEC

This course is a survey of the history of the funeral service industry and a comprehensive overview of the field of funeral service.

Emphasis is on the role and skills of the funeral service practitioner.

The course provides insight into the funeral service industry and the career opportunities available. Field trips may be required.

### FSE 310 Funeral Directing I 3 Units

*Prerequisite:* FSE 300 with a grade of "C" or better

*Corequisite:* CHEM 130 and FSE 320

*Enrollment Limitation:* Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program

*Hours:* 36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB

This course introduces the general practices of funeral directing. It focuses on the sociological phenomena that affect all the elements of funeral service including cultural differences, family structures, and factors of change that relate to funeralization. It also includes notification of death, transfer and disposition of bodies, arrangement conferences, pre-planned funerals, and post-arrangement follow-up. Field trips may be required. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

### FSE 312 Funeral Directing II 3 Units

*Prerequisite:* FSE 310 and 320 with grades of "C" or better

*Corequisite:* BIOL 130, FSE 330, and FSE 340

*Enrollment Limitation:* Student must be enrolled in the Funeral Service Education program to enroll in this course

*Course Transferable to CSU*

*Hours:* 36 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB

This course introduces the basic philosophies of a cross-section of religious and ethnic funeral practices and the role of the funeral practitioner in directing each type. It also includes procedures for fraternal, military, and celebrity funerals. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

### FSE 320 Funeral Service Law and Ethics 3 Units

*Corequisite:* CHEM 130 and FSE 310

*Enrollment Limitation:* Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.

*Hours:* 54 hours LEC

This course introduces law and the judicial system as they pertain to the funeral industry. Topics include sources of law, the legal status of the dead human body, the duty of burial, rights to control funeral arrangements and final disposition, liability for funeral expenses, torts involving the dead human body and the funeral director, wills, estates, probate, cemeteries, crematories, and state and federal laws and regulations. Personal and professional ethics that guide decisions and actions in the proper treatment of the dead are also included.

### FSE 330 Merchandising in the Funeral Service Industry 3 Units

*Prerequisite:* FSE 310 and 320 with grades of "C" or better

*Corequisite:* BIOL 130, FSE 312, and FSE 340

*Hours:* 54 hours LEC

This course introduces merchandising as it applies to the funeral service profession. The curriculum is divided into two main sections. The first covers construction and features of caskets, outer burial containers, and other funeral-related products. The second section examines methods of pricing, display, presentation, and control of funeral merchandise. Field trips may be required.

### FSE 335 Funeral Service Management 3 Units

*Corequisite:* ACCT 101 or 301

*Enrollment Limitation:* Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education Program.

*Hours:* 54 hours LEC

This course introduces the basic principles of management as they apply to the practice of the funeral profession. The role and function of an effective manager are explored. Emphasis is placed on the management functions of planning, organizing, motivating, directing, and controlling. Specific areas of funeral service practice and managerial guidelines for those areas are covered. Additionally, management theory as it relates to funeral service practice is addressed. Field trips may be required.

### FSE 340 Pathology for Funeral Service 2 Units

*Prerequisite:* CHEM 130 or 305 with a grade of "C" or better

*Corequisite:* BIOL 130, BIOL 440, FSE 312, or FSE 330

*Hours:* 36 hours LEC

This course offers a study of pathological disease conditions and how they affect various parts of the body. Particular conditions that relate to or affect the embalming or restorative art process are emphasized.

**FSE 350 Restorative Art 3.5 Units**

*Corequisite: FSE 360 AND ACCT 101 or ACCT 301*

*Enrollment Limitation: Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education program.*

*Course Transferable to CSU*

*Hours: 54 hours LEC; 27 hours LAB*

This course introduces the techniques of creating an acceptable physical appearance of the deceased for the benefit of the survivors. Topics include the study of facial features, cosmetics, and restorative treatment for a variety of situations faced by the practitioner.

**FSE 360 Embalming I 4 Units**

*Corequisite: FSE 350 AND ACCT 101 or ACCT 301*

*Enrollment Limitation: Acceptance into the Funeral Service Education program.*

*Hours: 54 hours LEC; 54 hours LAB*

This course introduces the phenomenon of death in the human body. It includes the processes of preservation, restoration, and sanitation in treating the dead human body. Field trips may be required. A portion of this course may be offered in a TBA component of 27-54 hours which may include embalming, preparation, or documentation.

**FSE 365 Embalming II 2 Units**

*Prerequisite: FSE 350 and 360 with grades of "C" or better*

*Corequisite: FSE 297 and 370*

*Enrollment Limitation: Students must show proof they are within the final semester of coursework including funeral service education courses, general education courses, and competencies.*

*Hours: 36 hours LEC*

This course is a continuation of FSE 360. It is the study of vascular anatomy, case analysis, the selection and injection of embalming fluids, and treatment of specific conditions requiring special attention.

**FSE 370 Funeral Service Counseling 3 Units**

*Prerequisite: FSE 335, 350, and 360 with grades of "C" or better*

*Corequisite: FSE 297, FSE 365, and PSYC 390*

*Hours: 54 hours LEC*

This course examines communication skills and the role of the funeral director as facilitator, counselor, and caregiver. Topics include specific communication and counseling techniques as they are applied in funeral service practice as well as normal and abnormal grief reactions, children and death, crisis intervention counseling, and dealing with stress and burnout. Field trips may be required.